

CONTRACEPTION: ALTERNATIVES TO THE PILL

Anna Hallemeier, M.D.

Week 23

Educational Objectives:

1. Become familiar with non-daily contraceptive options currently available to women in the United States
2. Discuss the risks, benefits, and complications associated with different non-daily contraceptive options and the relevant aspects of the patient's history that affect choice of appropriate contraceptive
3. Recognize the indications for emergency contraception, and how and when to consider prescribing it

CASE ONE:

Ms O. is a 32-year-old woman presenting to your office with a chief complaint, "I really don't want to get pregnant right now!" She has been taking the mini-pill (progestin-only) and breastfeeding her 6-month-old daughter, but recently started menstruating again. She would like to discuss alternative options for birth control, stating, "With life so crazy, now, I just can't trust myself to take a pill every day."

Questions:

1. **What are some contraceptive options that are available in this country besides the pill? Discuss some of the benefits, draw-backs, and risks of each method.**
2. **Are there specifics of the patient's history that might help you and your patient decide which contraceptive might be most appropriate for her?**

BONUS:

3. **Is breastfeeding an effective method of contraception?**

CASE TWO:

A 19-year-old college sophomore, calls the after-hours line of your clinic, stating, "I had sex with my boyfriend on Saturday night, and the condom broke. I'm afraid I might get pregnant. What should I do?"

- 4. It's early Monday morning. What options might she have available to her?**

Primary References:

1. Kaunitz AM. Beyond the pill: New data and options in hormonal and intrauterine contraception. *Am J Obstet Gynecol.* 2005; 192:998-1004.
2. Herndon EJ and Ziemann M. New Contraceptive options. *American Family Physician.* 2004; 69:853-60 (Table 2. Overview of contraceptive options currently available in the United States).
3. Levine, JP. Non-daily hormonal contraceptives: establishing a fit between product characteristics and patient preferences. *Journal of Family Practice.* 2004; 53:904-913. (Table 2. Non-daily hormonal contraceptive side effects and long-term safety).
4. Pfizer. Letter from Pfizer Pharmaceuticals on Depo-Provera. November 18, 2004.
5. Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health. Emergency Contraception: A Practitioner's Guide. 2006.

Additional References:

6. Cromer BA et al. Depot medroxyprogesterone acetate and bone mineral density in adolescents—The Black Box Warning: a position paper of the Society for Adolescent Medicine. *Journal of Adolescent Health.* 2006; 39:296-301.
7. David PS et al. Hormonal contraception update. *Mayo Clin Proc.* 2006; 81:949-955.
8. Grimes DA and Raymond EG. Emergency contraception. *Annals of Internal Medicine.* 2002; 137:180-189.
9. Kennedy KI and Visness CM. Contraceptive efficacy of lactational amenorrhoea. *Lancet.* 1992; 339:227-230.
10. Peterson HB and Curtis KM. Long-acting methods of contraception, *New England Journal of Medicine.* 2005; 353:2169-2175.
11. Trussell J et al. The role of emergency contraception. *Am J Obstet Gynecol.* 2004; 190:S30-38.